



EDITED BY AUNT BUSY.



BOOK 2—CHAPTER 8.

Of Familiar Friendship With Christ.

When Jesus is present all is well, and nothing seems difficult; but when Jesus is absent, everything is hard. When Jesus speaks not within, consolation is little worth; but if Jesus speak only one word, we feel great consolation.

Did not Mary Magdalene instantly rise up from the place where she wept, when she heard the voice of the Master, and she would give them a little book containing an account of the life of St. Joseph, whose image adorned one side of the medal.

How foolish and vain, if thou desire anything out of Jesus!

Is not this a greater loss to thee than if thou shouldst lose the whole world? Let all beloved of Jesus give thee without Jesus?

Is Jesus with thee, no foe can harm thee. Whoever findeth Jesus findeth a good treasure—yes, a good above every good.

And he that loveth Jesus loveth much—yes, more than the whole world. He that loveth without Jesus is in weakness and poverty, and he who is with Jesus is rich.

It is a great art to know how to converse with Jesus; and to know how to help Jesus is great wisdom.

Be humble and peaceable, and Jesus will be with thee. Be devout and calm, and Jesus will abide with thee.

Do not forget to drive away Jesus, and lose His grace, if thou wilt turn aside after outward things.

And if thou drive Him from thee and lose Him, to whom wilt thou turn? Whom, then, wilt thou seek for thy friend?

Without a friend, thou canst not be happy; and if Jesus be not a friend to thee, thou art indeed lost.

Thou dost foolishly, therefore, to trust in any other, or to rejoice in any other. Rely rather to choose to have Jesus, whole world against us than to offend Jesus.

Of all, therefore, that are dear to thee let Jesus be thy special beloved.

For Jesus, beloved of Jesus' sake, but Jesus for His own sake.

Jesus Christ alone is singly to be loved; for He alone is found good and faithful above all friends.

Never desire to be singly preferred or beloved; for this belongeth to God alone, who hath none like unto Himself.

Neither desire that anyone's heart should be much taken up with thee; nor do thou be much taken up with the love of any one; but let Jesus be in thee, and in every good man.

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The holy Martyr Lawrence, with his Priest, overcame the world because he despised whatever seemed delightful in this world; and for the love of Christ he suffered the High Priest of God, St. Lawrence, whom he exceedingly loved, to be taken away from him.

He overcame, therefore, the love of man by the love of the Creator; and instead of the consolation he had in man, he made choice rather of God's good pleasure.

So do thou also learn to part with an intimate and beloved friend for the love of God.

And take it not to heart when thou art forsaken by a friend, knowing that at last we must all be separated one from another.

A man must have a great and a long conflict within himself before he can learn fully to overcome himself, and to direct his whole affection to God.

When a man stands upon himself, he easily inclines after human consolations.

But a true lover of Christ and a diligent pursuer of virtue, does not fall back upon comfort, nor seek such sensible delights, but rather prefers hard exercise and to sustain severe labors for Christ.

Therefore, when God gives spiritual consolation, receive it with thanksgiving; but know that it is God's free gift, and no merit of thine.

Be not lifted up, be not envious, nor vainly presume, but rather be more humble for this gift, more cautious, too, and fearful in all thy actions; for that hour will pass away, and temptation follow.

When consolation shall be taken away from thee, do not presently despair, but with humility and patience await the heavenly visitation, since God is able to restore to thee more abundant consolation.

This is no new strange occurrence to those who have known the ways of God; for among the great saints and ancient Prophets there has often been this kind of vicissitude.

Hence there was one who, when grace was withdrawn from him, said: "Thou hast turned away Thy face from me, and I became troubled."

Yet even then he despaired not, but more earnestly prayed to the Lord, and said: "O Lord, I will cry; and to my God will I make supplication."

At length he receiveth the fruit of his prayer, and witnesseth that he was heard saying: "Thou hast turned away Thy face from me, and I became troubled."

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